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Downtown News

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Downtown Restaurants Offer Tasty Choices

In the Spotlight

Feature building for this issue is the People's Bank Building built by D. J. Rose and designed by Milburn&Heister in 1918. The building housed the Rocky Mount National Bank until 1933. In 1934 it reopened as the People's Bank and Trust Company. Many of Rocky Mount's most prominent lawyers and business people began their careers in the office space on the upper floors of the building.

Can You Help?

We are trying to add to our building information files about the People's Bank Building. We are especially interested in old photographs of the building, information about offices that were in the building, and any floor plans that were in existence for the building.

Contact the Downtown Development Office at 972-1267 with any information you are willing to share about this downtown building.

A quick tour of the central city revitalization area reveals a wide variety of tasty food choices for downtown employees, visitors, and shoppers. One of the newest downtown eateries, **The All Aboard Restaurant, on Coastline Street behind the downtown YMCA**, features wonderful New York style pizza, stromboli, calzone, sausage rolls, homemade lasagna, manicotti, several types of subs, hamburgers and hotdogs. **A&E Chicken & Barbecue at 101 Atlantic Avenue**, offers tasty southern style favorites such as fried chicken and barbecue sandwiches.

Famous for its pork chop days all over the Southeast, **The Carleton House Inn on the corner of Church and West Thomas Streets**, offers breakfast buffets, daily buffets, and a wonderful Sunday buffet complete with baked Alaska. **Central Café at 132 S. Church Street** is the place to find some of the tastiest hamburgers, hot dogs, and sandwiches in the city. **Kay's Restaurant on Tarboro Street** has delicious plate lunches and some of the best homemade fruit cobblers a hungry visitor to downtown will ever eat.

The **New China Restaurant at 430 West Thomas** has delicious oriental cuisine and **The Thomas Street Seafood and Grill at 421 West Thomas** has wonderful take-out seafood. For one of the best pimento cheese sandwiches and orangeades ever, try the food counter at **Thompson's Pharmacy at 365 Falls Road**. For unique taste treats, **The Tropical Delight Jamaican Restaurant, 119 NE Main Street**, is famous for its Jerk chicken, Red Snapper Fish, and curried chicken served with steamed cabbage and salad topped with a special house dressing.

Many of the downtown restaurants offer phone ahead ordering for people on a tight lunch schedule.

Coming Attractions: Watch for the opening of the temporary location of the Arts Center and the Children's Museum in the Old Belk Annex on South Church Street.



Enjoying lunch at the "All Aboard Restaurant," one of the newest spots for a great meal in downtown Rocky Mount.



Bright Idea for this issue: While downtown Rocky Mount continues to be one of the safest areas of the city, the following tips may help prevent a bad experience downtown or anywhere else you travel :

- *Always lock your vehicle and place valuables out of sight in the trunk.
- *Never leave your purse, cell phone, CD's, etc. in your vehicle. These items are easily targets for thieves.
- *Watch your surroundings. Report any suspicious behavior to police or security officers before getting out of your vehicle, especially at ATM locations.

Rocky Mount Celebrates Preservation Week in May

Rocky Mount joined communities across America in celebrating Preservation Week May 14-20. Special activities included the installation of signs marking the National Register Historic Districts here in the city. The signs were designed and installed through the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission for the City of Rocky Mount. Members of the Historic Preservation Commission include chairperson Peggy Goode, Mary Grace Fariello, T. Wes Bailey, Josie B. Davis, Raymond Gantt, Jr., Sam Johnson, Vel Johnson, John Mebane, Peggy Perry, T.E. Ricks, Elizabeth Scott, and Polly Warner. The next scheduled meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission is June 27 at 7:00 PM at City Hall.

Small Business Consortium Outgrowth of Small Business Support Meeting at Harambee Square

Finding ways to support small business development in the Rocky Mount community was the focus of a meeting hosted by Tadi Wantadi, of the AT&T University/NC Institute of Minority Economic Development, on March 20 in the conference room of the Rocky Mount/Edgecombe Community Development Corporation at Harambee Square. As an outgrowth of the meeting, Alan Matthews, Vice President of Business Recruitment for the Rocky Mount Area Chamber of Commerce, spearheaded the publication of a brochure listing contact information for eleven of the local agencies who provide small business support services as well as business permit application information from the City of Rocky Mount. To request a copy of the brochure, contact Alan Matthews at 973-1213.

Is Downtown Rocky Mount Ready for Business?

Interest in available property for business start ups in the central city area of Rocky Mount continues to grow, but the number of available tenant ready properties remains a problem. Some of the stumbling blocks in locating new businesses in vacant buildings are listed below:

- Building in poor condition—Many buildings require more than reasonable cost for a prospective tenant to make in preparing the building for occupancy. A good rule of thumb is that the cost to prepare the building for occupancy for a new tenant should not cost the tenant more than the monthly rent x 6. In other words, if the monthly rent for a property is \$800, the tenant should not expect to spend more than \$4,800 make the building ready for customers.
- Mechanical systems in building not modernized—Good heating and air conditioning systems in working order are requirements for a marketable building in the competitive market of available properties.
- Lack of good business neighbors in surrounding buildings—If surrounding buildings are in poor condition or if neighboring business people are negative about doing business in downtown it discourages others to invest in downtown.

The Downtown Development Office has developed a program for providing support and information to property owners who are serious about getting their properties ready for new business tenants. Contact us at 972-1267 for additional information.

Downtown Web Site On Line!

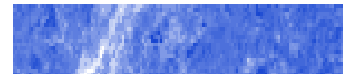
Our Web site is still under construction, but feel free to take a look and request information at the following site:

www.ci.rocky-mount.nc.us/downtown/



Did You Know..

The Downtown Development Office has materials on the preservation of architectural details of commercial buildings such as cast iron facades which we will gladly share with property owners at no charge. Contact Downtown Development Manager Kaye Edmisten at 972-1267



“Firms employing fewer than 20 people –which create approximately 85 percent of all net new jobs in the U.S. –are attracted to the smaller space, lower rent and high-quality facilities found in many rehabilitated buildings.”

Source: Indiana Main Street Program quoted in April 1, 2000 edition of *Downtown Idea Exchange*.

